

India Street Neighborhood Study  
Melatiah Nye House  
also known as the Carroll House  
43 India Street  
Nantucket  
Nantucket County  
Massachusetts

HABS No. MASS-1041

HABS  
MASS  
10-NANT  
75B-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

INDIA STREET NEIGHBORHOOD STUDY  
MELATIAH NYE HOUSE  
also known as the Carroll House

HABS  
MASS  
10-NANT  
758-

Location: 43 India Street (on north side), Nantucket,  
Massachusetts.

Present Owner: Marjorie Harris Reynolds

Present Occupant: Marjorie Harris Reynolds

Present Use: Seasonal residence.

Brief Statement  
of Significance: A variation on the Nantucket house; part of the  
India Street Neighborhood Study (MASS-1013).

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners:

- 1804 -- Melatiah Nye bought land from William Rawson and Absalom Coffin, "at a place called Egypt".
- 1860 -- James Codd bought from Melatiah Nye land with dwelling and outhouses for \$350.
- 1864 -- Almira Ransom from James Codd.
- 1891 -- Annie Ring bought from William P. Hiller who had inherited the property under will of Almira Ransom.
- 1919 -- Helen Hunt Newell bought from Annie Ring.
- 1927 -- Cecilia G. and James E. Carroll bought from Helen Hunt Newell.
- 1955 -- Robert F. and Lila C. Solley from Cecilia G. and James E. Carroll.
- 1966 to date -- Marjorie Harris Reynolds bought from Robert F. Solley (Lila C. Solley being deceased).  
(Abstract: Records at Registry Deeds, Nantucket, Massachusetts.)

- 2. Date of erection: c. 1805. (Abstract: Book 18, Page 178 and Book 55, Page 292, Registry Deeds, Nantucket, Massachusetts)
- 3. Architect: As Melatiah Nye was a carpenter, he probably designed and built his own home along the simple lines considered suitable at the time.
- 4. Original plans, construction, etc.: This house, like several others on India Street which were built at about the same time by those in the mercantile trade, reflect the Quaker background in their simplicity. H. B. Worth in "Early Houses"

said, "near the opening of the 19th century a modification of the lean-to style came into general use on the Island and contained all the advantages of the ancient type and was more convenient. Among these are several on India Street. This style consists of a two story house with center or end chimney and a two-story ell in the rear. From 1795 to 1820 most of the large houses were of this pattern."

5. Notes on alterations and additions: The house has been less changed than most of its neighbors, perhaps because there were so few changes in ownership during the years since it was built. It has also been well cared for.

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

This house is located in that area originally described as the Third Squadron of Wesco Acre Lots, at a place commonly known by the name of Micah's Pond. India Street in the early 1800's was largely occupied by the wealthier families, many of whom derived large profit from the East India trade as well as from whaling. According to the Portfolio, written in 1811, it was first called India Row; later it became Pearl Street and still later the name was changed back to India Street. When this house was built, the street was known as Pearl Street. Westminster Street to the north was formerly called Clay Lane, and Micah's Pond extended from that area to the central part of India Street.

There have been comparatively few owners of the house. Melatiah Nye, who built it around 1805, owned it until 1860. He was a carpenter, born in Nantucket in 1777, who married Hannah Hayden in 1796 and after her death in 1835 "from bilious cholic", took a second wife, Mary Jones, when he was sixty-nine and Mary, a widow, was forty-four.

William Rawson and Absalom Coffin, who sold the land to Melatiah Nye, were both successful whaleshop captains who had no doubt invested in land in this coming residential area.

The owner of the house from 1891 to 1919 was Miss Annie Ring, a beloved teacher in the Nantucket schools for many years as well as having the distinction of serving as Nantucket's first woman "Selectman" for several terms.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old Views: Old photograph of "Pearl Street" in Nantucket Illustrated, by A. Wittemann, New York: Albertype Co., 1888; 1953 photograph of 43 India Street in Ninety Five Per Cent Perfect by Everett U. Crosby, Nantucket: Tetaukimmo Press, 1953; plan of property drawn by J. H. Robinson, August, 1927, recorded in Plan Book 8, Page 27, Registry of Deeds, Nantucket, Mass.

Prepared by Mrs. Marie M. Coffin  
Nantucket, Massachusetts  
January, 1971

PART II. PROJECT INFORMATION

These records were prepared as part of the India Street Neighborhood Study (MASS-1013) made in the summer of 1970 by the Historic American Buildings Survey on Nantucket, Massachusetts. This is the fifth summer project of a continuing HABS comprehensive survey of the early architecture and urban design of Nantucket financed by a grant from the Nantucket Historical Trust.

The project was under the general supervision of James C. Massey, Chief of the Historic American Buildings Survey. Project Director was Professor F. Blair Reeves, A.I.A., of the University of Florida. Historical information was provided by Mrs. Marie M. Coffin of Nantucket, Massachusetts. Photographs are by Jack E. Boucher of Linwood, New Jersey. The material was edited for deposit in the Library of Congress by Mrs. Constance Werner Ramirez, August 1971.